Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

1. (currently amended) A method for providing boot information <u>from a file server</u> to a client on a computer network, comprising:

selecting<u>, by the file server,</u> a multicast address at which the boot information will be multicast <u>from the file server to the client;</u>

<u>sharing information about the selected multicast address between the file server and a boot negotiation server, wherein the boot negotiation server and the file server are separate computer devices; and</u>

determining<u>, by the boot negotiation server,</u> whether the selected multicast address is being used to multicast information different from the boot information; ~~and~~

transmitting<u>, by the file server,</u> the selected multicast address to the client if the selected multicast address is not being used.

2. (original) The method as set forth in claim 1, wherein determining whether the selected multicast address is being used to multicast information different from the boot information includes transmitting a conflict query.

3. (original) The method as set forth in claim 1, wherein a plurality of boot server processes are present on the computer network.

4. (currently amended) The method as set forth in claim 3, further comprising <u>plural clients, plural boot negotiation servers and plural file servers,</u> ~~using a file server process to multicast the boot information to the client at the selected multicast address, wherein the file server process and at least one of the plurality of boot server processes are located on different machines~~ <u>wherein the plural boot negotiation servers and the plural file servers shares information about selected multicast addresses for each client</u>.

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5. (currently amended) The method as set forth in claim 4, further comprising:

using one of the plurality of boot servers processes to notify the at least one file server process that the at least one client will be making a request to the at least one file server process; and

using the plural file servers process to transmit an acknowledgements that the file servers process is are ready for the clients to make the requests.

6. (currently amended) The method as set forth in claim 5, further comprising configuring the file server process for the requests from the clients system after receiving notification from the one of the plurality of boot server process negotiation servers and before sending the acknowledgements.

7. (currently amended) The method as set forth in claim 3, wherein determining whether the selected multicast address is being used to multicast information different from the boot information includes transmitting a conflict query from a querying boot server process to a remainder of the plurality of boot servers processes.

8. (original) The method as set forth in claim 7, further comprising selecting a different multicast address if the selected multicast address is being used to multicast information different from the boot information.

9. (currently amended) The method as set forth in claim 7, wherein an address conflict is found if one of the remainder of the plurality of boot servers processes sends an acknowledgements to the conflict query.

10. (original) The method as set forth in claim 8, further comprising marking the selected multicast address as being used and storing the marked selected multicast address in a database.

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11. (original) The method as set forth in claim 1, further comprising using the client to listen at the selected multicast address for the boot information to be multicast.

12. (original) The method as set forth in claim 11, wherein the client listens at the selected multicast address for a period of time.

13. (currently amended) The method as set forth in claim 12, further comprising:
        receiving no response during the period of time; and
        using the client to send a request to a the file server process to transmit the boot information at the selected multicast address.

14. (currently amended) The method as set forth in claim 11, further comprising using the client to receive the boot information from a the file server process that is multicasting the boot information at the selected multicast address.

15. (currently amended) A method for resolving address conflicts on a computer network prior to booting a client, comprising:
        selecting, by a file server, a first multicast address at which boot information will be multicast from the file server to the client;
        using a first boot negotiation server process on the network to determine whether other boot negotiation servers processes on the network are using a the first multicast address; and
        sending, by the file server, the first multicast address to the client if the first multicast address is not being used by the other boot negotiation servers processes;
        selecting, by the file server, a second multicast address if the first multicast address is being used by the other boot negotiation servers processes;
        sharing information about the selected multicast address between the file server and the boot negotiation server, wherein the boot negotiation server and the file server are separate computer devices.

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16. (original) The method as set forth in claim 15, further comprising using the client to listen at the first multicast address to receive boot information.

17. (currently amended) The method as set forth in claim 15, wherein using a the first boot negotiation server process on the network to determine whether other boot negotiation servers processes on the network are using a the first multicast address further comprises causing the first boot negotiation server process to transmit a conflict query to the other boot negotiation servers processes over the computer network.

18. (currently amended) A pre-boot address management method for configuring a file server process on a computer network to send boot information to a client, comprising:

      causing a first boot server process on the computer network to select a first multicast address;

      selecting, by a file server, a first multicast address at which boot information will be multicast from the file server to the client;

      sharing information about the first multicast address between the file server and the boot negotiation server;

      using the first a boot negotiation server process to send a query packet to other boot negotiation servers processes on the computer network to determine whether the first multicast address is being used to provide information different from the boot information; and

      using the first boot negotiation server process to notify the file server process that the client will be requesting boot information at the first multicast address if the first multicast address is not being used to provide information different from the boot information;

      wherein the first boot negotiation server negotiation process and the file server process are located operate on separate machines.

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19. (currently amended) The pre-boot address management method as set forth in claim 18, wherein a response to the query packet is received by the first boot negotiation server process if the first multicast address is being used to provide information different from the boot information.

20. (currently amended) The pre-boot address management method as set forth in claim 18, wherein the first boot negotiation server process selects a different multicast address if the first multicast address is being used to provide information different from the boot information.

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